United Nations E/ICEF/2000/11

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
10 March 2000

Original: English

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Annual session 2000
22-26 May 2000
Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

For action

Progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children

Summary

This is the ninth annual report on progress towards the goals of the World Summit for Children. The report presents an overall picture of global trends and outlines the processes put in place for the end-decade review, which will take place in 2001. It describes, in particular, ongoing efforts to strengthen national capacities for the collection and use of data to monitor progress towards the Summit goals.

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–3	2
II.	Overview of progress towards the World Summit for Children goals	4–48	2
	A. The global context	4–21	2
	B. Progress towards the major goals	22–48	5
III.	Progress in preparation of the end-decade review	49–77	9
	A. Process of the end-decade review	49–67	9
	B. Improving data on the situation of children	68–77	12
IV.	Recommendations	78	13

* E/ICEF/2000/9.

00-34221 (E) 070400

I. Introduction

1. This is the ninth annual progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children. It has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 35 (v) of the World Summit Plan of Action, which requests the governing bodies of the relevant specialized agencies and United Nations organs to include a periodic review of implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action in their regular sessions.

2. This report presents an overall picture of progress made towards the major World Summit goals and outlines processes set in motion to prepare for the end-decade review in 2001, including encouragement of national reviews and ongoing efforts to strengthen further national capacity in the collection and use of data to monitor progress towards the goals. Specific UNICEF actions contributing to progress, especially those taken at the country level, are described in the Report of the Executive Director to the present Board session (E/ICEF/2000/4 (Part II)).

3. As acknowledged in previous reports, available data indicate that while notable progress has been made on some of the goals, overall achievements fall short of the global targets set for end-decade. A more comprehensive assessment of the situation at end-decade will be presented by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly Special Session on follow-up to the World Summit for Children in 2001.

II. Overview of progress towards the World Summit for Children goals

A. The global context

4. During 1999, the international community was presented with formidable challenges, as well as opportunities, to safeguard and promote children's rights and to fulfil the promises made at the World Summit for Children. While progress was made over the year, setbacks were also encountered. Global trends of deepening poverty and widening disparities, persistent gender discrimination, increasing numbers of people affected by armed conflicts and natural disasters, and the growing HIV/AIDS pandemic created the need for renewed international commitment to accelerate and sustain progress.

5. The tenth anniversary of the General Assembly adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was celebrated in 1999. Shortly after the adoption of the Convention in 1989, the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children called for its early ratification and subsequent implementation and monitoring. At the beginning of the new millennium, the Convention stands as the most ratified human rights treaty in history, with only two countries yet to ratify. Since its adoption, nine States have fully or partially withdrawn the reservations they had entered upon ratification.

6. The anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child also provided a special opportunity to assess progress in the implementation of the Convention and to identify areas requiring further concerted attention. Special sessions held at the Commission on Human Rights, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly were instrumental in this regard.

7. In October 1999, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, with support from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNICEF, promoted a number of expert discussions to assess achievements in implementation of the Convention and to identify challenges for future action. Recommendations formulated by the Committee on the basis of these discussions call for: further legal reform and law enforcement; development of national agendas for children's rights to ensure, among other things, priority for children in budget allocations; consideration of a child impact assessment of policies and programmes; promotion of behaviour change in favour of children's rights; and strengthening of international solidarity for children, as well as partnerships with and for children.

8. International momentum was evidenced in the increasing attention to children's issues by development agencies, as illustrated in the guidelines adopted by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which promote a rights-based approach, including reference to the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and for the Common Country Assessment (CCA), which include indicators for major conferences and summits, including the World Summit for Children. It was further reflected in the growing visibility given to children in peace and security activities, as illustrated

by the adoption of Security Council resolution 1261 of 25 August 1999 on children in armed conflict.

9. At the regional level, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child entered into force in November 1999, providing African States with the first regional treaty on the rights of children, and setting important standards for their protection. These include the establishment of 18 years as the minimum age for the recruitment of children into the armed forces and their participation in hostilities.

10. In spite of such positive developments and mobilization around children's rights, key challenges remain in addressing underlying conditions that have an impact on children and their families. The global economy expanded faster than anticipated in 1999, at an estimated rate of 2.6 per cent, as recovery from the economic crises of the previous years got under way. Yet the latest World Bank estimates indicate that 1.2 billion people – of whom about half are children – are struggling to survive on less than $1 a day. Income disparities have been widening, both between and within countries, inhibiting social integration and social protection for disadvantaged groups. Economic liberalization, deregulation and privatization are having an increasing impact on livelihoods and social well-being in much of the developing world.

11. For many of the world's poorest countries, the costs of debt servicing are seen in collapsing health systems and declining opportunities for education. According to a recent study, only one third of 27 developing countries surveyed manage to spend more on basic social services than on debt servicing. Average life expectancy in the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs) is 53 years, 10 years less than the average for developing counties. In several of these countries, notably in sub-Saharan Africa, over 20 per cent of children are not expected to reach the age of five. Of the 30 countries with the highest number of child deaths, 25 are in the HIPC group. Some 39 million children of primary school age in HIPCs (40 per cent of the total) are not attending school.

12. It was against this background that a decision was taken by the Group of Eight at their summit in Cologne, Germany, in June 1999 to broaden and accelerate implementation of the HIPC Initiative launched in 1996. The Cologne summit articulated as a central objective of the Initiative a greater focus on poverty reduction through release of resources for investment in health, education and social needs. There is still, however, a question as to whether the reform initiative will provide debt reduction of sufficient depth to allow Governments to meet urgent needs. In July 1999, UNICEF and OXFAM proposed three principles for a broad and flexible framework to make the HIPC Initiative a more effective mechanism for poverty reduction. Under this proposal, eligibility for HIPC debt relief should be based on commitment and capacity to reduce poverty rather than solely on meeting macroeconomic targets. Debt relief should augment capacity to reduce poverty, achieve sustained and equitable growth and invest in children and human resources. In addition, the International Monetary Fund should be seen as just one stakeholder in a wider group comprising donors, United Nations agencies and civil society in assessing national commitment and capacity.

13. Reaching global goals for children is rendered even more difficult by declining levels of development aid. In 1998, official development assistance (ODA) recovered some of the ground lost during the 1992-1997 period. But at $51.5 billion (0.23 per cent of the combined gross national product (GNP) of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members, 1998 ODA was still far short of the 1992 level of $60.9 billion (0.33 per cent of combined GNP). Cuts in ODA have hit hardest in poor countries, which are also bypassed by private capital flows, where child mortality is high and access to basic services low. In a welcome move, the ministers of development in Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom pledged to work together to reverse the decline in ODA, improve aid coordination and focus aid on poverty reduction.

14. The 20/20 Initiative has been an important vehicle for promoting investment in basic social services. Thus far, about 40 developing countries have concluded detailed analyses of their national budgets with a view to improving the quality of, and access to, basic services. Donor agencies are also reporting separately how much of their ODA allocations are directed towards basic education and basic health. In 1999, at the request of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly on the Implementation of the World Summit for Social Development, UNICEF prepared a report on 20/20 implementation, with recommendations to strengthen future actions. These recommendations focus on

enhanced partnerships, continued monitoring and implementation, ODA reporting and support, and capacity-building and dissemination of best practices.

15. In an encouraging trend, rising awareness in the corporate sector of the need to address social development concerns is leading to enhanced cooperation between public and private sectors. A number of transnational corporations and private foundations have responded to the challenge from the Secretary-General to establish a compact for development between the private sector and the United Nations. A new initiative launched in January 2000, the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), unites a broad coalition of business leaders, philanthropic foundations, development banks (including the World Bank), Governments and United Nations agencies (including the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF) in an effort to ensure that all children are immunized using every effective vaccine available.

16. Yet 1999 was also marked by a rising number of humanitarian emergencies, causing untold suffering through loss and disruption of lives, destruction of livelihoods and uprooting of peoples. Complex political crises and armed conflicts have created growing insecurity in much of the developing world. Conflicts such as those in Angola, Burundi, Chechnya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, East Timor and Kosovo have added to the toll of deaths and displacements arising from protracted civil conflicts around the world, in which the poorest and the weakest, particularly women and children, suffer the most.

17. Major natural disasters also wreaked havoc in 1999. The cyclone in Orissa, India, affected 12.7 million people, among them more than 3.7 million children, many of whose schools were destroyed. An earthquake in Turkey claimed over 12,000 lives and left 600,000 homeless. Flooding took a heavy toll in Venezuela. National and international relief efforts to counteract the worst of the suffering in such emergencies, while providing a decisive response, can often divert much-needed aid from longer-term development goals.

18. In all these crises, refugees and the displaced not only face shortages of food, safe drinking water, basic health care and schooling opportunities; they also suffer from the devastating psychological shock of their experiences. Children are particularly vulnerable. Recent relief efforts demonstrate that an emphasis on basic education and psychosocial interventions is key in stabilizing the situation of children in crisis and setting the stage for restoration of their normal lives, thus promoting a bridge between relief and long-term development.

19. The rapidly spreading HIV/AIDS pandemic is cutting a swathe through whole societies, striking its deadliest blow among the poorest and the weakest. In its human and social ramifications, HIV/AIDS constitutes a global emergency, threatening stability, exacerbating inequalities and undermining previous gains in development. Its impact on children is of tragic proportions. As of the end of 1999, 1.2 million children under the age of 15 are estimated to be living with HIV, with 570,000 new cases in 1999. To date, nearly 4 million children under 15 have died of AIDS. An estimated 70 per cent of HIV/AIDS-infected people live in sub-Saharan Africa, where the disease is wiping out much of the progress made in social services in the past decades, putting an intolerable strain on social infrastructures and draining already inadequate financial and human resources.

20. A particularly devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS crisis on children is felt by those left orphaned by the death of parents due to the disease. By the end of 2000, an estimated 10.4 million children who are under the age of 15 will have lost their mother or both parents to AIDS, with 95 per cent living in sub-Saharan Africa. Faced with social stigma, isolation and discrimination, and deprived of adequate structures of care, AIDS orphans are less likely to be immunized, more likely to be malnourished, less likely to go to school and more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Nor are these losses abating: in 35 countries, the rate at which children have been orphaned has doubled, tripled or even quadrupled in three years. While the largest numbers of AIDS orphans are in sub-Saharan Africa, there are growing fears that Asia will see the number of orphans triple by the year 2000. Furthermore, over 90 per cent of HIV-infected children under age 15 started life as babies born to HIV-positive women. With continuing increases in infection among girls and women, protective measures and the reduction of mother-to-child transmission become ever more critical.

21. The current allocation of resources to combat the epidemic is grossly inadequate, with AIDS spreading

three times faster than the funding to control it. Current national AIDS activities in Africa in particular must be expanded dramatically and rapidly to ensure an adequate level of response. It is in this context that important initiatives were undertaken in 1999. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) launched the International Partnership against AIDS in Africa to encourage visible and sustained political support; help develop nationally negotiated joint plans of action; increase financial resources; and strengthen national and regional capacity. Moreover, as a sign of the growing international concern caused by the pandemic, the United Nations Security Council met in January 2000 to address the impact of HIV/AIDS on peace and security in Africa.

B. Progress towards the major goals

22. It was against this mixed picture of opportunities and challenges in 1999 that households, communities, Governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with support from the international community, attempted to make progress towards the end-decade goals of the World Summit for Children. While notable progress has been made towards some of the goals, particularly in certain regions, achievements remain uneven, thus making it highly unlikely that global targets will be reached by 2000.

Under-five mortality

23. The World Summit goal for 2000 is to reduce the 1990 under-five mortality rate (U5MR) by one third, or to 70 per 1,000 live births, whichever is lower. On the basis of currently available data, while U5MR has been declining in line with the demographic transition occurring in recent years, the pace of decline has been slowing. Moreover, the historical trend risks reversal in the coming years as a result of the increase in deaths due to AIDS, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.

24. In 1990 it was estimated that 130 million children would die of largely preventable diseases and malnutrition during the last decade of the century. The Summit goal was established on the hypothesis that synergy generated by achieving a number of related goals would prevent these unnecessary deaths and enable a reduction in U5MR by one third or more. The related goals are: elimination of neonatal tetanus; 95 per cent reduction in measles deaths; halving of child deaths caused by diarrhoea; reduction by one third of child deaths caused by acute respiratory infections; availability of family planning education and services to all couples; promotion of breastfeeding; virtual elimination of vitamin A deficiency; reduction in incidence of low birth weight to less than 10 per cent; 50 per cent reduction in child malnutrition; universal basic education and halving of adult illiteracy; and universal access to clean water and safe sanitation. The end-decade review in 2001 provides an opportunity to assess progress made in each of these goals and impact on U5MR.

25. Achievement of goals is most likely where there is stability, effective policies, strong institutions and an adequate flow of resources. Armed conflict, economic recession and massive debt servicing, large-scale natural disasters, the spread of HIV/AIDS and declines in ODA have all seriously compromised progress in the reduction of U5MR. This may explain why the rate of decline has fallen significantly; in the 1980s the rate declined by around 20 per cent, whereas in the 1990s the decline is projected to be less than 10 per cent.

26. At the same time, the past decade has shown that opportunities to deliver essential services for children can be successfully seized in spite of crisis situations. In 1999, important National Immunization Days (NIDS) were conducted in countries affected by war, including Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Similarly, increasing participation of the private sector in supporting provision of social services, as illustrated by GAVI, is also opening new avenues for reducing preventable deaths.

Maternal mortality

27. The goal is to reduce by one half the 1990 levels of maternal mortality. It is now well recognized that in the short term, for countries without complete vital registration systems, the maternal mortality rate (MMR) cannot be used to monitor maternal mortality reduction. Process indicators, such as the proportion of births attended by skilled attendants, will have to serve instead. There has been marginal change over the past decade in the proportion of births attended by a skilled attendant. Therefore, specific goals to increase such coverage were adopted through the five-year review of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action in 1999.

28. A recent analysis examined the limited data on trends in maternal mortality in a small number of countries with civil registration systems. The data show that while there have been some dramatic declines in levels of maternal mortality in these countries, most of the declines took place during the 1970s and 1980s. Since then, progress has slowed despite the increased interest in the issue generated around the Safe Motherhood Initiative. Lack of progress in the reduction of maternal mortality during the 1990s is undoubtedly due to a complex set of interrelated factors — including overall status of women in society and the lack of respect for women's rights — all of which demand further analysis and action.

29. A positive step forward in 1999 was the agreement of cooperation between Columbia University in New York and UNICEF to reduce maternal deaths and disability in the South Asia region (including Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka). Overall strategies are based on three elements: (a) appropriate technology to reduce delays in the provision of emergency obstetric care; (b) appropriate management to promote efficiency and effectiveness while enhancing leadership, motivation, self-confidence and teamwork; and (c) respect for human rights to ensure that both service providers and those who are served are treated with dignity and in a manner that enhances self-esteem. The impact of such interventions will be felt only over the long term.

Child malnutrition

30. The major goal is to reduce by one half the 1990 levels of severe and moderate malnutrition among children under five years of age. WHO projections suggest that malnutrition in children under five decreased from 32 per cent in 1990 to 27 per cent in 2000. This represents only one third of the targeted reduction to be achieved by 2000. Moreover, the overall decline masks great regional differences. The Latin America and Caribbean region will likely achieve the goal; Asia has experienced some progress at a very low rate; but in sub-Saharan Africa, child malnutrition rates are increasing. The World Bank and UNICEF are currently undertaking an assessment of their work in nutrition, in order to identify what they might do both individually and together to reverse these alarming trends.

31. For some specific micronutrient goals, there has been great progress. About 70 per cent of the world's population is now consuming iodized salt, compared to less than 10 per cent in 1990. As a result of global efforts, millions of babies born each year are saved from the mental impairments of iodine deficiency disorders (IDD). Global partnerships for salt iodization have brought together Governments, private foundations, bilateral donors, United Nations agencies — and especially Kiwanis International — in efforts to eliminate IDD. Ongoing work aims to enlist support of the salt industry, at all levels, in order to build sustainability and to carry out a standardized assessment of household salt iodization across the globe, including through the global salt conference scheduled for May 2000.

32. In 1998 and 1999, remarkable progress was made in providing vitamin A supplements to young children. More than 45 countries, including 30 in Africa, have given vitamin A supplements during NIDs. It is estimated that millions of lives are saved each year because of vitamin A capsules. The Vitamin A Global Initiative, whose partners are the Canadian International Development Agency, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department for International Development (DfID) (United Kingdom), WHO, UNICEF and the Micronutrient Initiative, continued support for this work throughout the year. Another micronutrient deficiency, anaemia, affects 39 per cent of pre-school age children and around half of pregnant women globally, more than 90 per cent of them living in developing countries. While data are insufficient for trend analysis, there is little indication of improvement.

33. There has been some progress in the promotion of standards in favour of breastfeeding. The number of countries with national legislation that includes all provisions of the International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes has risen from 11 in 1994 to 20 in 1999. Forty-six other countries have legislated some parts of the Code and are in the process of legislating additional clauses. The number of baby-friendly hospitals rose to 14,828 by the end of 1999, up from 13,127 in January 1998. While much effort is required to address the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, consensus among WHO, UNAIDS, UNICEF and other partners on informed choices by HIV-positive mothers is seen as an important milestone. In addition, a major WHO/UNICEF technical consultation on infant and young child feeding was organized in March 2000 to

review progress and identify effective future approaches.

Basic education

34. The goal is to achieve universal access to basic education and completion of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school-age children by the end of the decade. The reduction of gender disparity is an important supporting goal. Although the proportion of primary school-age children in school continues to increase globally, disparities between regions in progress made is striking. For instance, the net primary school enrolment in the East Asia and Pacific region has reached levels similar to those in industrialized countries, whereas the rate in sub-Saharan Africa is lower than it was in 1980.

35. Ten years after the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) in Jomtien, Thailand, Governments, development agencies and NGOs have worked throughout the year to establish processes to assess progress towards the World Summit/EFA goals in basic education. These include national measurements of progress based on a set of indicators related to the six EFA goals, and review of educational policies and reforms. Six regional conferences were held during the last quarter of 1999 and the first quarter of 2000 to review country reports and develop regional frameworks for future action. A synthesis of the findings is currently under way. The World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000 will provide an opportunity to review progress made and to reaffirm national and international commitment to achieving basic education for all children, without discrimination. Efforts will help promote an education system that is inclusive, participatory, gender-sensitive and relevant to the lives of children and society as a whole.

36. At the end of 1999, a number of lessons from the decade have become clear. Analysis of slow progress in education reveals the decisive impact of prevailing economic and social disparities on access to school, completion of basic education and learning achievement. As mentioned in previous reports, an estimated 130 million primary school-age children are not in school, and more than 150 million teenagers have not reached a minimum level of education (grade five), thus limiting their opportunities to participate in shaping the future of their societies. Although gender disparity has been reduced, nearly 60 per cent of out-of-school children are girls, a situation that is particularly visible in South Asia. In light of this, the Secretary-General had requested the UNDG to develop, jointly with other United Nations partners and the World Bank, a 10-year, system-wide Girls' Education Initiative. Disparities in education are not limited to gender. The difference in primary school education between urban and rural locations can be enormous, reaching a 40 percentage point difference in some countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

37. Discrimination and marginalization, armed conflict, political instability and HIV/AIDS are also serious challenges to the realization of a child's right to education. At the same time, education is increasingly recognized as an essential strategy to prevent the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the stigmatization of affected children. It is vital in order to break the perpetuation of poverty and to heal and reintegrate child victims of violence, abuse and exploitation. For all these reasons, the allocation of resources for basic education, both in national budgets and in the context of development assistance, becomes an urgent priority.

38. Analysis has further revealed the positive impact of community involvement in education, including through the participation of community-based organizations and NGOs. In relation to early childhood care programmes in particular, this approach has shown its special value in helping prepare children for an enriching learning process in school. Moreover, positive experiences of partnerships through sector investment programmes (SIPs) and sector-wide approaches (SWAPs) have been promoted, such as the Education Sector Development Programme in Ethiopia and the Programme for the Advancement of Girls' Education in Zambia. These experiences may become useful references in developing comprehensive education programmes in other countries.

Water and sanitation

39. The goal is to achieve universal access to safe drinking water and to sanitary means of excreta disposal. Preliminary estimates, using new methodologies developed by WHO and UNICEF within the framework of the Joint Monitoring Programme, show that access to improved sources of drinking water and sanitary means of excreta disposal have increased only marginally, and that the number of people lacking access to these basic services has remained essentially unchanged over the decade.

Estimates for 1999 indicate that about 80 per cent of the world population has access to improved water sources and 60 per cent has access to sanitation. This means that over 1 billion persons still lack access to improved drinking water sources and about 2.5 billion lack access to sanitation.

40. A combination of factors, including reduced public investment in basic social services and a decline in ODA during the 1990s, have contributed to this overall lack of progress. Furthermore, a major lesson emerging from a series of consultations organized in 1999 reconfirms that construction of water sources alone does not ensure access to water. The vision emerging from these consultations accords high priority to people's empowerment rather than just to hardware service delivery. Improving water supply and sanitation in schools to promote and encourage early adoption of hygienic practices is also a key area of focus.

41. At the same time, it is encouraging to note significant advances made by a number of countries, many of which are among the most populous in the world. Rural water supply gains are notable in Guatemala, India and the Islamic Republic of Iran. In the area of urban sanitation, China and Indonesia have made progress. In rural sanitation, countries such as Bolivia, Egypt, Pakistan, Peru and Thailand stand out. These examples demonstrate that with commitment, significant strides can be made towards achievement of the water and sanitation goals.

Child protection

42. The goal is to achieve improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances. The momentum reflected in the late 1990s in conferences addressing child protection issues, including child labour and child sexual abuse and exploitation, gained further ground in 1999, particularly in the development of international standards. A distinct focus was also given to child protection in several policy forums, including in the Security Council, where it has increasingly gained visibility.

43. In June 1999, the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour was adopted, reaffirming the unacceptability of all forms of slavery or similar practices, including sale and trafficking of children; forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; child prostitution and pornography; and work which by its nature or circumstances is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children. UNICEF is collaborating with ILO in the campaign to promote ratification of this new legal instrument.

44. Two draft Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child were finalized by working groups of the Commission on Human Rights. The Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict establishes a ban on compulsory recruitment below 18 years of age and calls on States parties to prevent the direct participation in hostilities of persons below that age. The Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography calls for the criminalization of such violations of children's rights and encourages a process of information, education and international cooperation to combat them.

45. Several of these issues are at the heart of current discussions on a draft Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its additional protocols against the Smuggling of Migrants and to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. UNICEF has joined with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration to express its concern that this Convention and its protocols ensure the proper protection of smuggled or trafficked children, including their right to leave and return to their country, and any additional rights they may have as refugees.

46. Plans are proceeding for a follow-up to the 1996 World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children to assess progress made in the implementation of its Declaration and Agenda for Action. Moreover, a number of Governments, including Cambodia, Costa Rica and Japan, have adopted national legislation to protect children from sexual exploitation. Legislative reform initiatives continue to be undertaken in other areas where the special protection of children is at stake, including in juvenile justice, as was the case in Bulgaria, Lebanon and Russia, where child labour laws have also been addressed.

47. Diverse initiatives are raising the visibility of children with disabilities. These include the Conference on Social Integration in the Russian Federation; creation of a national database for the disabled to facilitate access to basic services and social assistance in Armenia; and establishment of clubs for parents of disabled children in Ukraine. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, a pilot project on "inclusive libraries" has been launched to mobilize major government institutions and NGOs towards a common strategy for children with disabilities.

48. In a further effort to overcome the persistent invisibility of children requiring special protection measures, the end-decade assessment will help strengthen the database on these children, in particular through inclusion in national surveys of modules on child labour and orphans, and through collection of data on disabilities.

III. Progress in preparation of the end-decade review

A. Process of the end-decade review

49. General Assembly resolution 51/186 of 16 December 1996 decided to convene a Special Session in 2001, requesting the Secretary-General to submit to that session a report on the implementation and results of the World Summit for Children Declaration and Plan of Action. This report will comprise an overall assessment of progress, including lessons learned; an analysis of factors that have inhibited or enabled progress for children; and an overview of the remaining challenges and key issues, followed by specific recommendations for the future. Through its resolution 54/93 of 17 December 1999, the General Assembly established an open-ended Preparatory Committee for the Special Session and invited Governments and relevant organizations, as well as regional and subregional organizations, to undertake reviews of progress achieved since the World Summit.

50. The first organizational session of the Preparatory Committee took place in February 2000, with the first substantive session to be held 30 May to 2 June 2000. Proceedings at the first substantive session will include discussion of a report from the Secretary-General, as well as panel discussions on emerging issues, future actions for children, and constraints in implementing World Summit goals.

51. General Assembly Resolution 54/93 recognized the important role played by a broad range of actors and the need for their involvement in preparations for and during the Special Session. In this spirit, the first organizational session of the Preparatory Committee decided that the work of the committee should be open to the participation of NGOs accredited with the Economic and Social Council or with UNICEF. In addition, it was decided to invite participation of NGOs that have a collaborative relationship with UNICEF. Finally, the committee encouraged Governments to include representatives of civil society in their national and regional preparatory processes.

National reviews

52. In his report to the General Assembly in 1998 (A/53/186), the Secretary-General recognized that Governments have a central role to play in the national review process. The most critical tasks are to: (a) assess the current situation of children and women on a goal-by-goal basis; (b) organize reviews and policy discussions; (c) analyse the underlying factors that prevent, or may enhance, further progress in the situation of children and women; (d) devise strategies and allocate resources to deal with these factors, including, where appropriate, the provision of ODA, while intensifying the use of available technologies and proven approaches to tackle immediate challenges to the realization of children's rights; and (e) strengthen national capacity and participatory decision-making processes, thereby building a sound foundation for the ownership and sustainability of all interventions.

53. Following resolution 54/93, and recalling commitments made at the World Summit for Children and arising from the virtually universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Secretary-General has asked world leaders to undertake reviews in their countries, urging that they be "fully participatory and receive support from the highest levels of government". Such reviews should assess progress in the past decade in a manner to help guide actions for the future; ensure that World Summit follow-up is effectively integrated with actions to implement recommendations of the international conferences in the 1990s; and take account of the obligations emanating from ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

54. Reviews to be conducted at the national level provide a special opportunity to stimulate greater awareness of, and commitment to, children's rights on the part of government bodies, other national institutions and society at large, including children and youth. The review process may, in addition, be used to broaden partnerships for and with children, promote increased accountability for children and strengthen commitments for future actions on their behalf.

55. National reviews should, as far as possible, build upon: existing processes and mechanisms, including reviews conducted in the context of other major United Nations conferences; implementation and reporting processes under the Convention and other applicable treaties; reviews developed for relevant regional conferences, including as a follow-up to the World Summit; and established mechanisms for data collection, analysis and use.

56. In assessing the situation of children and women, the use of a common set of global indicators, including those developed through extensive consultation within UNICEF and with WHO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), ILO and major research institutions, should be encouraged. Such an approach will greatly facilitate the aggregation and comparison of data across countries and regions, the identification of regional and global trends and issues, and the eventual production of the report of the Secretary-General, to be completed by July 2001.

57. In light of the virtually universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the large number of reports already submitted by States parties (176 initial and periodic reports to date), Governments may wish to refer, when preparing their national reviews, to the thematic clusters of children's rights promoted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

58. National reviews should pay particular attention to relevant provisions of the World Summit Plan of Action, in particular paragraphs 34 and 35. This will require, *inter alia*, an assessment of the extent to which national programmes of action have achieved their intended purposes, including the extent to which their development and subsequent implementation has been integrated with or has influenced national and subnational planning and policy processes. Reviews should also consider budget allocations for children, including development assistance budgets; national monitoring systems of children; partnerships for and with children; efforts deployed by Governments, industry and academic institutions to increase basic and operational research and achieve better results for children; and progress in the field of international cooperation.

59. As mentioned in the present report, armed conflicts, the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and steadily widening social and economic disparities between and within countries constitute major challenges to sustainable human development and the fulfilment of children's rights. They compromise achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children. For this reason, national reviews should pay special attention to the impact of such phenomena and consider strategies that may help reverse these trends.

60. Reports submitted by Governments on their national reviews will inform the development of the report of the Secretary-General and discussions at such additional substantive sessions of the Preparatory Committee as may take place in 2001. Country reports should be completed by December 2000.

Regional process

61. At the regional level, inputs will be built upon existing processes, such as the ministerial conferences established to review progress towards the goals of the World Summit. In this regard, it is important to recall that the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation has declared 2000-2010 the decade of children's rights, with a regional end-decade review planned as part of its preparations for the Special Session. In East Asia and the Pacific, a ministerial consultation on children and development is planned for early 2001 in Beijing, following four others held since 1990. In Latin America and the Caribbean, four ministerial meetings have been held since the World Summit to assess and analyse progress towards the goals. The most recent of these, held in Lima, Peru, in November 1998, adopted the Lima Accord, setting out specific actions to be implemented by countries of the region before the year 2000 in order to accelerate progress. The next ministerial Meeting on Children and Social Policy in the Am[illegible]as will be held in Jamaica in October 2000. At the most recent Ibero-American Summit, held in Havana, Cuba, in November 1999, it was decided that the central theme of the Tenth Ibero-American Summit, to be held in Panama in November 2000, will be "Children and Adolescents".

62. It is hoped that these and other regional initiatives will reinforce political commitment and accountability to children and will contribute to the end-decade review process in building global consensus on the major remaining challenges and priorities for future action. Building on national-level analyses, reviews and policy discussions, these and other regional processes can help identify and synthesize overall trends and lessons learned; highlight regional disparities; promote the cross-fertilization of experiences, thereby influencing national processes; and promote solidarity within the region.

At the global level

63. UNICEF, other international organizations and donors will encourage and support Governments in conducting the end-decade review, including through the contribution of their own analyses and identification of their strategies for the future. Increased inter-agency cooperation will greatly facilitate inputs in the end-decade review by other United Nations agencies. At the country level, introduction of the UNDAF/CCA process has added a new dimension and created important opportunities, not least by stressing the importance of the substantive agendas of United Nations conferences, including the World Summit for Children, and conventions such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in guiding United Nations cooperation at the country level.

64. Paragraph 35 of the World Summit Plan of Action calls for the full cooperation and collaboration of relevant United Nations agencies and organs in achieving the goals. The governing bodies of concerned agencies are requested to ensure that within their mandates the fullest possible support be given to achievement of the goals. Similarly, article 45 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child encourages international cooperation and recognizes the role of United Nations agencies in supporting implementation of the Convention in their respective mandates. It is therefore hoped that their involvement in the end-decade review will further promote the mainstreaming of children's rights and the achievement of development goals for children as part of the pursuit of their own mandates. In this regard, it is important to recall discussions at the 1999 annual session of the Executive Board on the preliminary recommendations of UNICEF for future global action for children and the focus of the organization beyond 2000. The aim is to ensure that as infants begin life, they are healthy and nurtured in a caring environment that enables them to be physically healthy, mentally alert and emotionally secure and able to learn; that all children have access to and complete basic education of good quality; and that adolescents have opportunities to develop fully their individual capacities in a safe and enabling environment, in order to participate in and contribute to the development of their own societies.

65. Development and implementation of the end-decade assessment has involved very extensive work with United Nations agencies and other international and national organizations. Extensive consultation has been promoted for the identification of a common set of indicators used, *inter alia*, in relation to the EFA assessment and in the area of water and sanitation. As described below, the same spirit of collaboration paved the way for development of the end-decade household survey questionnaire and manual for the multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS2) developed by UNICEF, with participation of WHO, UNESCO, ILO, UNAIDS, the United Nations Statistics Division, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, MEASURE (USAID) and major research institutions.

66. In the spirit of the World Summit Plan of Action, international development agencies and regional institutions, including political and economic organizations, are also expected to participate in the end-decade review process. They will be invited to report on their own reviews or progress over the decade, including steps taken to achieve Summit goals and agreements, mutual cooperation for their implementation, and monitoring.

67. In accordance with resolution 54/93, the Committee on the Rights of the Child will be associated with the end-decade review process. This will provide an opportunity for this treaty-monitoring body to inform the preparatory process and the Special Session of its assessment of major trends in the implementation of the Convention. Similarly, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography will be invited to contribute in the areas of their respective mandates, thus enabling the review process to ensure special attention to major areas of concern affecting the degree of fulfilment of children's rights.

B. Improving data on the situation of children

68. The World Summit Plan of Action requested "the assistance of the United Nations ... to institute appropriate mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the Plan of Action, using the existing expertise of the relevant United Nations statistical offices, the specialized agencies, UNICEF and other United Nations organs". In responding to this request, UNICEF has pursued two major thrusts: working with others to help countries improve their data; and providing substantial and direct support to countries to fill data gaps through household surveys.

69. Many United Nations agencies and other international organizations are involved in collecting, analysing and reporting data related to the situation of children. These include WHO, UNESCO, ILO, UNAIDS, the United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Population Division, United Nations Statistics Division, World Bank, OECD, USAID and DfID. UNICEF is working with these organizations in strengthening and using the data they have obtained to minimize duplication and stress on country-level data systems.

70. In the context of cooperative efforts, two relatively recent initiatives are of particular note: the UNDAF and the OECD report "Shaping the 21st Century: the Contribution of Development Cooperation" (OECD21). The UNDAF process, through the CCA, is developing, at country level and across the United Nations funds and programmes, a shared assessment of the country situation in the context of objectives of international conferences and conventions. Indicators in this process are consistent with those used by UNICEF in the end-decade assessment.

71. OECD21 aims to monitor social and economic progress in the twenty-first century, using a small number of key indicators. Recent meetings of the Economic and Social Council, and of international organizations and major donors held in Paris, are helping develop a major programme to support the improvement of national statistical data systems. Once again, the indicators used in OECD21 are consistent with those used by UNICEF in the end-decade assessment.

72. While these recent initiatives show promise in helping fill gaps in data on children, there is a great deal of current data on children that is lacking. Experience from the mid-decade assessment of the situation of children has demonstrated that the MICS household survey tool enables countries to produce data that can meet rigorous international requirements in terms of relevance and quality. By 1996, 60 developing countries had carried out stand-alone MICS, and another 40 countries had incorporated MICS modules into other surveys.

73. A 1997 evaluation of the mid-decade MICS, together with other lessons learned, were used in developing the end-decade MICS2. Indicators developed in 1993 with WHO and UNESCO to monitor progress towards World Summit goals were revised in 1998, taking into account experience gained from the mid-decade assessment, and in consultation with many United Nations and other partners. The revised indicators not only reflect the goals of the World Summit for Children, but also include a small set of additional indicators on child rights, including child labour, birth registration and such emerging issues as *HIV/AIDS*.

74. In supporting countries to fill gaps in data, at both national and subnational levels, and to improve their capacity, UNICEF is providing financial and technical support to the MICS2 initiative. Technical support is more wide-ranging and detailed than at mid-decade. Specific attention is given to strengthening data processing, analysis and report writing, which were identified as areas of weakness in the evaluation of the mid-decade MICS. Subnational data collection and analysis are being encouraged in order to identify disparities and focus action in areas of greatest need.

75. Regional workshops are a major component of the MICS2 technical support. Three sets of workshops focus on survey planning and data collection; data processing; and data analysis and report writing. Six workshops on survey planning and data collection have already been completed. Each has had major participation by government partners involved in national statistical data systems and in implementing MICS2 in countries within the region. The workshops have included facilitators who have extensive experience with survey activities at international and regional levels.

76. The regional data processing workshops, which have recently begun, are providing hands-on experience to national government staff in using existing and familiar software in processing MICS2 data. All MICS2 data are being processed within originating countries, further helping build local capacity.

77. Implementation of MICS2 at the country level is currently in progress, with 66 countries expected to carry out stand-alone surveys, and more than 40 others expected to include questionnaire modules in other national household surveys. Results from these surveys are scheduled for the end of 2000.

IV. Recommendations

78. The Executive Director *recommends* that the Executive Board adopt the following draft decision:

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the overall progress being made in the implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children and its contribution to the realization of children's rights;

2. *Recognizes* that extraordinary efforts are needed to accelerate progress towards the end-decade goals and, in this context, *urges* Governments to adopt all appropriate measures, including allocation to the maximum extent of available resources for action in favour of children, and promotion of universal access to basic social services;

3. *Recognizes* that increasing challenges compromise progress in the achievement of the World Summit goals and acknowledges that UNICEF should continue its advocacy and direct programme work to ensure the realization of the rights of children affected by armed conflict and HIV/AIDS;

4. *Requests* donor Governments to reverse the decline in ODA, in order to support efforts aimed at the achievement of the World Summit goals and universal access to basic social services, especially in those countries with greatest needs;

5. *Requests* Governments to conduct reviews at the national and subnational levels to assess progress made in the achievement of World Summit goals, including lessons learned, and to identify strategies for future action, and further requests they report thereon to the Secretary-General;

6. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue to advocate for and support efforts by Governments and other relevant actors in civil society to achieve the end-decade goals, within the framework of national and subnational programmes of action;

7. *Welcomes* the efforts made by UNICEF to strengthen national capacities for the collection and use of data to monitor progress towards the end-decade goals, and *encourages* the Executive Director to continue to work with Governments and other partners towards that end;

8. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue to cooperate with United Nations agencies and other partners at the international and national levels to promote the achievement of the World Summit goals and in the preparation of the Special Session of the General Assembly in 2001;

9. *Further requests* the Executive Director to support the Secretary-General in the preparation of his report on the end-decade review in 2001, including an overall assessment of progress achieved and lessons learned during the decade, an analysis of the main factors that have inhibited progress, an overview of remaining challenges and issues, and specific recommendations for the future;

10. *Further requests* the Executive Director to report to the Executive Board on the implementation of the present decision at the 2001 annual session.